

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

"Large number of gameplay altering glitches"

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What did you play? Here's our guide to the changes made to games *after* their release.

Did you know that there are in fact six different versions of the sublime *Metroid Prime* on shelves around the world? Or that Capcom made major alterations to *Resident Evil 4* after it was originally released?

It's not uncommon that even after slaving away for years on their gaming masterpieces, Nintendo makes late changes, long after the product is on the shelves.


But why would anyone bother when they could just as easily be enjoying the spoils of their hard work? From an endless, Lucas-style quest for perfection, to the legal implications of offending German sensibilities with graphic scenes of Goomba-killing, a variety of factors dictate whether a developer is going to spend the time and effort to edit a finished game.

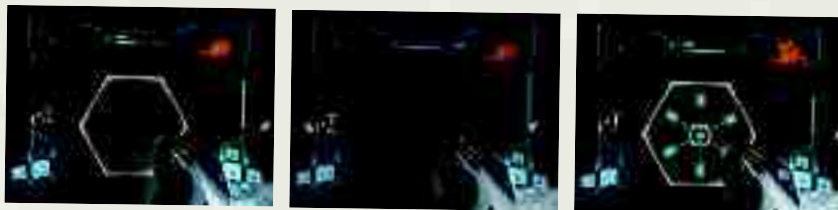
All differences mentioned are in comparison to the UK versions, and while games like *Wind Waker* and *Mario Sunshine* have also undergone tweaking, we kind of ran out of steam after playing through the entire output of those retcon specialists at Retro. Enjoy!




METROID PRIME

Over 50 alterations were made to *Metroid Prime* after its original US launch in 2002. While no official reason has been given by Retro or Nintendo for these changes, **NGC** has it on very good authority that they were joint decisions by both Retro and Nintendo, in a bid to correct crashes and a large number of gameplay altering glitches that many hardcore *Metroid Prime* fans were constantly abusing. The most notable changes include:

 The Geo Thermal Core – home to the game's most significant alterations. The original American release allows you to skip the Spiderball and Grapple Beam easily and has no Bendeziium blocking the door to the Plasma Beam. The USA Player's Choice release had an unbreakable lock added that could only be removed once the Grapple Beam was collected.



△ Pay less for the game on Player's Choice and you won't be able to enjoy certain sequence breaks.


 The Japanese version also has the stalagmite near the door removed (as this was as a stepping stone to reach the spinners without the Grapple Beam).




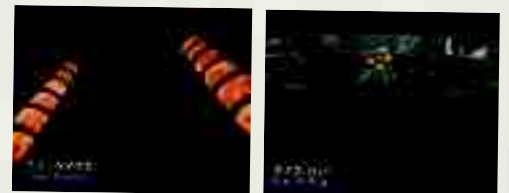
△ Buy the first release of a game and you may be acting as an unofficial playtester. Spoilports.



△ Samus is surprised to discover her reworked animation in the US versions of *Prime*.

 The room holding the Grapple Beam also felt the pinch, as the Bendeziium blocking access to it isn't there in the USA versions. Also, the Grapple Beam animation is significantly different in the original and Player's Choice USA releases.


 Magmoor Caverns and Phendrana drifts are known as 'Lava Caves' and 'Ice Valley' respectively in the Japanese version, and the male narrator introduces each new world.



△ The Japanese names don't feature the terrible puns and alien-sounding words of the English versions.

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Literally changing the games you play


 There's a Hunter Metroid present in the 'Frost Cave' room in the American and Japanese versions.




△ What? Where did he come from?




△ Not as rare as the North Korean version, in which Samus staves off hunger by eating her shoes.

 The incredibly rare Korean version has its own special 'feature'. If you happen to have an American *Metroid Prime* save file on the memory card, it will 'speed read' the data on it and will permanently corrupt the file, leading to many crazy and ridiculous things happening in the game. These things include adding new enemies to rooms (such as an Elite Pirate in Phendrana!), removing enemies from rooms (such as Thardus), removing major items (such as the Grapple Beam, Thermal Visor and Spiderball) and removing vital scan points, preventing you from ever finishing the game!

METROID PRIME 2: (DARK) ECHOES

 There are two known differences between the American and European versions of *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes*, the first one being that the Ghetto Jump for Early Seekers was removed. The second is that an Ing Cache was removed from venomous pond, designed to prevent you from reaching Chykka without the Grapple Beam. The American and Australian versions of *Metroid Prime 2* also came with a reflective cover, which wasn't used in Europe.




 The Japanese version, however, has had the most alterations to it (which includes the two mentioned above), the most significant being the name change. Known as *Metroid Prime 2: Dark Echoes* in Japan, it has had a large number of the tricks and glitches removed (eg the Jump Guardian trick, as seen in *NGC* issues 103/104) in an effort to force players through the game's intended route. Retro also made the jingle played when collecting a key in the Dark World sound more sinister.




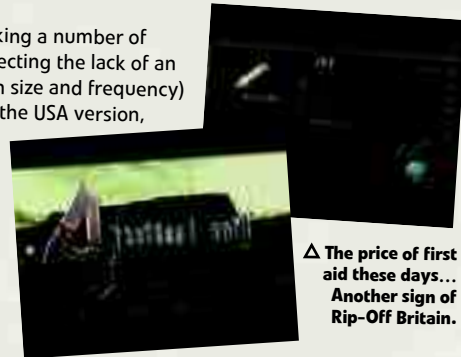
△ One simple method to see if you're playing the Jap version.

RESIDENT EVIL 4

 After the American release of *Resident Evil 4*, Capcom set about making a number of alterations to it for the European market. Such changes include correcting the lack of an Easy mode in the American version and the decrease in money pickups (both size and frequency) which made it slower to upgrade weapons. Ammo pickups remain higher in the USA version, though. Also, more than one First Aid spray can be carried at once, but they cost double the price at 10,000 ptas. And if you dump the El Gigante into the molten magma, exit and return to the room, the 15,000 ptas reward will still be left behind for you to collect.




 Then there's also the German version of *Resident Evil 4*, which has some major elements of the game removed in a bid to comply with Germany's 'Youth Protection Law'. Both Assignment Ada and the fantastic Mercenaries minigames cannot be accessed, meaning that the Chicago Typewriter and the Handcannon are also unavailable to use in the game.



△ The price of first aid these days... Another sign of Rip-Off Britain.


WAVE RACE BLUE STORM

 Nintendo changed some of the course names used in the Japanese version of the game. Lost Temple Lagoon was originally Ethnic Lagoon, Ocean City Harbour was known as City Harbour, Arctic Bay was Cool Ocean and La Razza Canal was known as Aqua Maze.



△ Political correctness gone mad! You couldn't make it up...

LUIGI'S MANSION

 After the release of *Luigi's Mansion* in Japan and the USA, Shigeru Miyamoto publicly addressed the criticisms levelled at the game's - lack of - challenge and said that they would make changes to it for the European and Australian release. The biggest alterations seem to be to the



Hidden Mansion that is unlocked after you finish the game. The Hidden Mansion in the European and Australian versions is in fact a mirrored version of the mansion, unlike in the Japanese and USA version of the game.

The Hidden Mansion in the European and Australian releases was made tougher with harder bosses, less hearts, a darker mansion and a lot more ghosts to be fought.



▷ Yes, it's Luigi's marvellous title screen.